



CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER

24-HOUR REPORT

26 JUNE 2017

(U) CALIFORNIA

(U) Los Angeles—FBI, LAPD Offer Warning About Kidnapping Scam Targeting SoCal Residents

(U) Law enforcement officials warned the public yesterday about a spree of "virtual kidnapping" schemes that have scammed people into paying thousands of dollars in ransom money even though their loved ones were never in danger. The FBI and Los Angeles Police Department said they have seen an increase in the crimes over the last two years, which involve suspects calling people and telling them they are holding a family member of theirs hostage. Since 2015 through May, police have reported 252 incidents in Los Angeles and victims have paid out over \$114,000 in ransom money.

SOURCE: 25 July 2017, [NBC 4 Los Angeles](#)

(U) Menlo Park—New Details Emerge on Mac Backdoor Malware 'Fruitfly'

(U) A security researcher has unveiled new discoveries about Fruitfly, a dangerous macOS malware that was discovered earlier this year. Patrick Wardle, the chief security researcher at Menlo Park-based firm Synack, found that the malware could take complete control of an infected device running macOS. Wardle found that the malware is still present and active on infected computers, with about 90 percent of the victims based in the United States. The delivery method of Fruitfly is not entirely clear yet, though it is believed the malware can be spread via email attachment, likely disguised as a genuine file like a PDF or Microsoft Office document.

SOURCE: 24 July 2017, [International Business Times](#)

(U) Monterey Park—Man Arrested after King Cobras Found Smuggled in Potato Chip Cans

(U) An alleged intended recipient of three 2-foot king cobra snakes was arrested yesterday on a federal smuggling charge after customs officers discovered the snakes being shipped in potato chip cans in March. Rodrigo Franco, 34, was arrested after a months-long investigation that also involved the seizure of a young crocodile, three alligator snapping turtles and five diamond back terrapins, all of which are protected species, federal officials said. Franco used WhatsApp, a smartphone messaging platform, to negotiate the shipments of snakes and turtles to and from Hong Kong, according to federal court records.

SOURCE: 25 July 2017, [Los Angeles Times](#)

(U) NATIONAL

(U) Missouri—Heavily Armed Driver Involved in Shootout with Police

(U) Kansas City—A man who died following a shootout with police on a busy stretch of interstate near St. Louis was heavily armed, wearing a bulletproof vest, and had threatened to kill a relative and co-workers, investigators said on 24 July. The incident began when several passing motorists stopped to help 31-year-old Jerrod Kershaw after he ran his vehicle off the road outside St. Louis. Kershaw—wearing a bullet-proof vest and brandishing a gun—then carjacked a vehicle and drove south along I-55. Around the same time, police were called saying that Kershaw had made "homicidal and suicidal" threats against his workplace. Police were able to stop Kershaw and a shootout followed, resulting in the

death of Kershaw. Police found several weapons in the car, according to the Jefferson County Sheriff.
SOURCE: 24 July 2017, [Associated Press](#)

(U) INTERNATIONAL

(U) Afghanistan—Taliban Attack Afghan Base, Kill at Least 26 Soldiers

(U) Kandahar— Taliban fighters have killed at least 26 Afghan soldiers in an attack on their base near the key southern city of Kandahar, according to the Afghan army. A defense ministry spokesman said heavy fighting was continuing in the area and reinforcements had been summoned in response to the attack that also wounded 13 soldiers. The Taliban announced that they are in control of the base in Khakrez district, which would be the latest in a series of army defeats by the militants in recent months.

SOURCE: 25 July 2017, [BBC](#)

(U) Somalia—US-Somalia Mission Detains Suspected Al-Shabaab Associate

(U) Mogadishu— The US military says a mission in Somalia has detained a suspected associate of the al-Shabaab extremist group who once lived in the United States. A US Africa Command spokeswoman said today that Abdirizak Tahlil is accused of “facilitating the use of improvised explosive devices in Somalia” and has been detained by Somalia’s government. Tahlil reportedly was granted status as a lawful US permanent resident and lived in the United States between 2006 and 2009.

SOURCE: 26 July 2017, [Associated Press](#)

SOUTHWEST BORDER

(U) Texas—Four Migrants Die Trying to Cross Rio Grande into the US

(U) El Paso— At least four people have died since 24 July trying to cross the Rio Grande into Texas, the authorities said yesterday, another deadly sign of the extremes to which migrants will go to reach the United States. Heavy rains have transformed the usually slow-moving stream near El Paso into a dangerous torrent, causing the deaths of two women, a 15-year-old girl, and a 16-year-old boy. Seven people have been rescued, but local and federal authorities were searching the Rio Grande for several people who were unaccounted for, according to a spokesman for the El Paso Police Department.

SOURCE: 25 July 2017, [New York Times](#)

(U) PREPARED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE THREAT ASSESSMENT CENTER.

(U) FOR QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, PLEASE EMAIL STAC@CALOES.CA.GOV, OR CALL 916-636-2900.

Warning: This document is the exclusive property of the State Threat Assessment Center (STAC) and is UNCLASSIFIED//FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY (U//FOUO). It contains information that may be exempt from public release under the California Public Records Act (Govt. Code Sec. 6250-6270). It is to be controlled, stored, handled, transmitted, distributed, and disposed of in accordance with STAC policy relating to U//FOUO information and is not to be released to the public, the media, or other personnel who do not have a valid "need-to-know" without prior approval of an authorized STAC official. No portion of this report should be furnished to the media, either in written or verbal form.

This document contains excerpts of suspicious activities and incidents of interest to the STAC as obtained from open and unclassified sources.